

Local council electoral structure review

Final Report

Monash City Council

September 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters for which it held this review and pays respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging. The panel acknowledges their custodianship for many thousands of years and their continuing living culture.

Version	Date approved	Approved by
1	6 September 2023	Ms Julie Eisenbise
1	6 September 2023	Mr Tim Presnell
1	8 September 2023	Ms Dana Fleming

Version approval:

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Brief description
1	26 September 2023	Program Sponsor	Final proofread and confirmed to be sent

Contents

Executive summary	4
Recommendation	4
Summary of approach	5
Developing electoral structure models	5
Preliminary report.....	5
Response submissions	5
Public hearing	5
Background	6
About the 2023–24 electoral structure reviews.....	6
The electoral representation advisory panel.....	6
Public engagement	6
Developing recommendations	7
About Monash City Council	11
Profile	11
Current number of councillors and electoral structure	12
Last electoral structure review.....	13
Preliminary report	14
Response submissions	15
Public hearing	17
Findings and recommendation	19
Number of councillors	19
Electoral structure	19
Ward names	21
The panel’s recommendation	22
References	23
Appendix 1: Map of recommended structure	24
Appendix 2: Public involvement	26
Response submissions	26
Public hearing	26

Executive summary

An independent electoral structure review panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government has reviewed the electoral structure of Monash City Council.

The purpose of the review was to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council.

Under Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Monash City Council must now have a single-councillor ward electoral structure.

The panel looked at:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards for the council
- the location of ward boundaries
- appropriate ward names.

This report presents the panel's final advice to the Minister on the recommended new electoral structure of Monash City Council to meet the requirements of the Act.

More information about the background to the review is available on [page 6](#).

Recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Monash City Council adopt an 11 single-councillor ward structure – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 11 wards in this electoral structure are Banksia, Blackburn, Gallaghers, Gardiners Creek, Jells, Mayfield, Scotchmans Creek, University, Warrigal, Waverley Park and Wellington.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the Act.

Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed map of this recommended electoral structure.

Summary of approach

Developing electoral structure models

The panel considered a range of factors when deciding on its final recommendation including:

- research and analysis
- voter growth or decline over time
- public submissions (see below).

More information on the way the panel decided on the models is available on [page 7](#).

Preliminary report

The panel published a preliminary report on Wednesday 19 July 2023 with the following electoral structure models for public consultation:

- Model 1: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1.
- Model 3: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1 and Model 2.

The full preliminary report is available on the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 25 submissions responding to the preliminary report. Of these, 2 submissions included maps.

A full analysis of response submissions received can be found on [page 15](#).

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 10 am on Wednesday 16 August 2023. Two people registered to speak at the hearing, though one speaker withdrew on the day.

Background

About the 2023–24 electoral structure reviews

In October 2022, the Minister for Local Government formed 2 electoral representation advisory panels to review and provide advice on the electoral structures of 39 local councils, under section 16 of the Act. If the Minister accepts the electoral structure recommended by the panel, any changes will take effect at the October 2024 local council elections.

The Act introduced several changes to local government representation, including the types of electoral structures local councils may have. All metropolitan, interface and regional city councils (including Monash City Council) must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

For Monash City Council, the electoral representation advisory panel examined:

- the number of councillors and wards
- where the ward boundaries should be
- the names of each ward.

The Act requires electoral structures to provide fair and equitable representation and facilitate good governance. Each ward must have an approximately equal number of voters per councillor (within +/-10% of the average). While conducting the review, the panel also noted the role of a councillor as specified under section 28 of the Act.

The electoral representation advisory panel

The panel that conducted the electoral structure review of Monash City Council had 3 members:

- Ms Julie Eisenbise (Chairperson)
- Mr Tim Presnell
- Deputy Electoral Commissioner Ms Dana Fleming.

The purpose of the review is to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council. The panel is independent of councils and the Victorian State government.

Under the Act, the VEC is not responsible for reviewing council electoral structures but must provide administrative and technical support to the panel. The Electoral Commissioner (or their delegate) must be a member of each panel.

Public engagement

Public information program

On behalf of the panel, the VEC conducted a public information and awareness program to inform the public about the Monash City Council electoral structure review. This included:

- public notices in state-wide newspapers

- public information sessions to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- a media release announcing the start of the review and the release of the preliminary report
- information on social media channels
- updated website content on vec.vic.gov.au, including:
 - current information on the review process
 - submission guide and fact sheets for each council under review with background information
 - response submissions from the public.

Monash City Council was also offered and took up 2 optional promotion methods to promote the reviews:

- targeting social media advertisements at the council area
- notifying voters in the council area subscribed to the VEC's VoterAlert service about the start of the review and release of the preliminary report.

Public consultation

The panel encouraged public input to the review of Monash City Council via:

- response submissions to the preliminary report
- an online public hearing for anyone who made a response submission to speak to the panel and expand on their submission.

Public submissions are an important part of the review process and are considered alongside other factors addressed during the review. These are outlined below.

Developing recommendations

The panel's final recommendations comply with the Act and were developed through careful consideration of:

- research and analysis conducted by the VEC support team, including geospatial and demographic data
- rates or patterns of population and voter change over time, and relevant forecasts of growth or decline based on forecast information provided by .id (informed decisions, a company specialising in demographics and forecasting)
- input received during public consultation.

Deciding on the number of councillors

The Act allows local councils to have between 5 and 12 councillors, but neither the Act nor the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 specify how the number of councillors is to be determined. As such, the recommendation put forward by the panel in this report is guided by

the Act's intention for fairness and equity in voter representation and the consequent facilitation of good governance.

In examining the appropriate number of councillors for Monash City Council, the panel considered the following criteria:

- the population and number of voters in the council area, compared to other councils with a similar population size and number of voters in the same category (for example, other comparable metropolitan, interface and regional city councils)
- patterns of population change and voter growth or decline in the council area over time
- the current and past numbers of councillors
- the representation needs of communities of interest in the council area
- any matter raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Local councils with a larger number of voters will often have more councillors. Large populations generally have greater diversity, both in the type and number of communities of interest and issues relating to representation. However, the ideal number of councillors can also be influenced by the circumstances of each council, such as the:

- nature and complexity of services the council provides
- geographic size and topography of the area
- forecast population and voter growth or decline
- social diversity.

Deciding the electoral structure

Under the Act, regional city, metropolitan and interface councils must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

When developing single-councillor ward models for Monash City Council, the panel considered these criteria:

- whether the structure would comply with section 15(2) of the Act (see below), and for how long it would likely comply
- the appropriate number of councillors, as outlined above
- whether meaningful and effective ward boundaries could be established and whether these would be easily identifiable to local communities
- the representation of communities of interest
- the voter distribution and physical features of the area, and the impact these may have on the shape and size of wards
- past elections for the council, including:
 - numbers of candidates nominating
 - incidences of uncontested elections

- rates of informal voting.
- other matters raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Under section 15(2) of the Act, subdivided structures must aim for an approximately equal number of voters per councillor in each ward. This means the number of voters represented by each councillor in a ward should be within +/-10% of the average number of voters per councillor for all wards.

During this review, the panel aimed to recommend a structure that would comply with section 15(2) at the time of the 2024 local council elections and, if possible, also comply based on voter numbers at the time the review was conducted. The panel used forecasts of population and voter change to assess compliance at the 2024 elections with as much accuracy as possible. In some cases, population change and other factors impacting voter numbers mean it is not possible to create compliant subdivided structures based both on voter numbers that were current at the time of the review and forecast voter numbers. In these instances, the panel prioritised compliance at the 2024 local government elections to ensure each vote will have approximately equal value at the 2024 election.

One of the factors that may impact compliance with section 15(2) is the number of current and forecast voters with ratepayer-based voting entitlements, also known as council-enrolled voters. Voters' rolls include both state-enrolled electors (the majority of the roll) and a smaller number of council-enrolled electors. The Act introduced changes to ratepayer-based entitlement categories, which come into full effect at the 2024 local council elections. The panel took this change to the makeup of voters' rolls, and therefore compliance with section 15(2) of the Act, into consideration during this review.

Deciding on ward names

The panel has taken the following approach to naming wards.

1. Retaining existing ward names if these were still relevant to the area covered by the ward.
2. When a new name was required, the panel based this on features such as:
 - places (registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*) in the ward
 - compass directions
 - native flora or fauna.

Use of Aboriginal language

The panel recognises that there should first be meaningful consultation with local Aboriginal communities and groups before a ward is named using Aboriginal language. Meaningful consultation is a significant process that the panel was not able to undertake within the timeframes of the current review program.

The panel also recognises that many of the place names in current use across Victoria are based on Aboriginal language. As such, the panel has only put forward new ward names using Aboriginal language if:

- it is the name of a place within a ward
- it is currently in common use

and

- the name is registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

Unregistered names using Aboriginal language have not been put forward by the panel as new ward names. While the panel supports the adoption of names based on Aboriginal language, this requires appropriate consultation.

Accordingly, for the panel to consider an Aboriginal language ward name that is suggested in a public submission to the review, the name submitted needs to comply with the above guidelines.

About Monash City Council

Profile

Monash City Council covers an area of 82 km² and is located in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, approximately 20 km from the Melbourne CBD. It shares its borders with Whitehorse City Council to the north, Knox City Council to the east, Greater Dandenong and Kingston city councils to the south-east, and Glen Eira, Stonnington and Boroondara city councils to the CBD side of the council's western boundary.

The Traditional Custodians of the land within Monash City Council are the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples.

Landscape

Monash City Council includes well-established suburbs in the north, such as Glen Waverley and Mount Waverley. These suburbs tend to be more affluent, housing a larger number of families and older workers. The suburbs in the southern part of the council area, such as Clayton and Oakleigh, have a greater proportion of students and younger adults (id 2022a).

Dandenong Creek forms the council's eastern boundary, which is lined with several parks and open spaces including parts of Dandenong Valley Parklands, Jells Park and Mulgrave Reserve. Scotchmans Creek Trail runs east-west through the centre of the council area, with several golf courses and various parks and reserves located throughout.

The main transport corridor running through the council area is the Monash Freeway, separating the communities of interest to the north and south of the council. It is also serviced by several major arterial roads, including the Princes Highway, Ferntree Gully Road and Springvale Road. The council area is well connected to public transport, with the Glen Waverley train line running across the north and the Pakenham-Cranbourne train line in the south.

Community

Monash City Council's population was 190,397 at the 2021 census (ABS 2022a), an increase from 182,618 in 2016 and 169,280 in 2011 (ABS 2011, 2016). From 2022, the population in the council area is projected to increase by 0.6% each year to about 196,000 by 2028. The median age of residents in 2021 was 38 years, marginally higher than the median of 37 years for Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022a, 2022b).

Population density is high across the council area. In the older and more established suburbs of Wheelers Hill and Glen Waverley, most people and families live in free-standing or separate houses. Medium, high density and apartment living is more common in the south and close to the train line, in suburbs such as Oakleigh, Clayton and Notting Hill.

The council is culturally diverse, with over half the residents born overseas, and over half speaking a language other than English at home. These rates are significantly higher in some areas, with suburbs such as Glen Waverley and Clayton home to large Chinese and Indian

communities (.id, 2022b). The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people at the 2021 census was 0.3%, lower than the 0.7% across Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022a, 2022b). Home ownership, at 66.2% of all households is consistent with the Greater Melbourne rate of 66.8%. Less than a third (30.2%) of all households are renting, the same rate as in Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022a, 2022b).

The unemployment rate of residents in the council area was 5.8% in 2021, slightly higher than the rate for Greater Melbourne of 4.1%. The top employment sectors in 2021 were health care and social assistance, professional, scientific, and technical services, with professionals and managers accounting for over 45% of occupations (ABS 2022a).

The weekly median income in Monash City Council was \$1,901 in 2021, the same as in Greater Melbourne. It is higher in some areas, especially in the north of the council, but lower in parts of the south (ABS 2022a, 2022b).

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Monash City Council is currently divided into 4 wards with a total of 11 councillors:

- one ward with 2 councillors (Glen Waverley Ward)
- 3 wards with 3 councillors each (Mount Waverley, Mulgrave, and Oakleigh wards).



Figure 1: Diagram of current electoral structure of Monash City Council.

There are approximately 120,771 voters in Monash City Council, with an approximate ratio of 10,979 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on Monash City Council.

Last electoral structure review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Monash City Council in 2011. This review was carried out under the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)*, which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*.

After conducting the review, the VEC recommended that Monash City Council continue to consist of 11 councillors elected from 4 wards (one ward with 2 councillors and 3 wards with 3 councillors each).

Subdivision review

Since the 2011 representation review, the VEC also conducted a subdivision review of Monash City Council in 2020.

Subdivision reviews conducted under the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)* adjusted the internal ward boundaries of a council but did not change the electoral structure or number of councillors. Subdivision reviews were conducted in situations where the voter-to-councillor ratios in one or more wards of a council were forecast to move outside the legislated +/-10% tolerance before the council's next election and aimed to ensure voter-to-councillor ratios for all wards were within tolerance at the election.

The 2020 review of Monash City Council aimed to return the Glen Waverley, Oakleigh and Mulgrave wards to within the permitted +/-10% tolerance before the 2020 local council elections. Visit the [Monash City Council profile page](#) on the VEC website to access a copy of the 2020 subdivision review final report.

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 19 July 2023. The panel considered research findings and the requirements of the Act when formulating the models presented in the preliminary report.

After careful consideration, the following electoral structure models were put forward for public consultation:

- Model 1: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1
- Model 3: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Models 1 and 2

The full preliminary report is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 25 response submissions to the preliminary report from the public by the deadline of 5 pm on Wednesday 9 August 2023. You can find a list of people or organisations who made a response submission in [Appendix 2](#).

The table below provides an overview of preferences in response submissions. You can read an analysis of submissions below this table.

Table 1: Preferences expressed in response submissions				
Model 1 (11 single-councillor wards)	Model 2 (11 single-councillor wards)	Model 3 (11 single-councillor wards)	No preferred model indicated	Other
8	3	5	7	2

As part of the public information program, alerts were sent to 58,757 register voters in Monash City Council. A total of 98,718 messages (55,904 SMS alerts and 42,814 email alerts) were sent at the start of the public consultation period.

Of the 25 response submissions received, 14 expressed a preference for one of the models. While 7 submissions did not support any specific preliminary report models, 6 submitters did support the electoral structure review process, the implementation of single-councillor wards, and left the panel to choose the best model. Two submitters mapped alternative 11 single-councillor ward structures and one submission focussed solely on ward names. Another submission posed a series of questions not specifically related to the electoral structure review and are more appropriately directed to Monash City Council and / or Local Government Victoria.

A further 2 submissions were incomplete and therefore not published.

Model 1

Eight submissions favoured Model 1, though 3 did not provide reasons for their choice. Those that did generally agreed Model 1 better captured communities of interest and used strong, identifiable boundaries. Submissions from Carissa Moore and Henry Lee Seldon stated that the wards are more spaciouly spread in Model 1, and the boundaries are easily identifiable.

Arguing against Model 1, Councillor Brian Little suggested having the 'traders' in both the Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley shopping strips and centres represented by the one Scotchmans Creek Ward councillor would not be adequate.

Four of the submitters supporting Model 1 resided in Glen Waverley and 3 were from either Mulgrave or Oakleigh. Councillor Little currently represents the Mount Waverley Ward in the northern part of the council.

Model 2

Three submissions favoured Model 2, of which 2 provided reasons in support of their choice. Both submitters (Rosalie Hocking and Councillor Little) provided arguments that focussed on the split of the current Mount Waverley Ward. Hocking favoured Model 2 due to the proposed Holmesglen Ward giving the suburbs of Ashwood and Chadstone their own councillor and voice. Councillor Little was concerned about the commercial and retail zones in Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley. Councillor Little compared how the wards in each model covered these areas. He reasoned that the Damper Creek and Scotchmans Creek wards proposed in Model 2 would provide a fairer allocation of councillor workloads.

Model 3

Three of the 5 submissions favouring Model 3 presented their arguments as follows: Brandon Maki reasoned Model 3 would better represent communities of interest across the council area; and Krishnan Guru raja rao found it would be the more balanced and representative structure of the 3 models.

Arguing against Model 3, Reuben Walters suggested there was no reason or sense to the elongated shape of the proposed Jells Ward and doubted it would provide equitable representation to communities of interest.

Other options

Two submissions mapped alternative 11 single-councillor structures. The panel's review of these models identified ward features in both that could complement the preliminary report models. The panel concluded however, that neither model could be adopted in full or to a significant degree because:

- while both generally reflected communities of interest in the arrangement of wards, considering the whole council area, they did not offer a better structure compared with the proposed models.
- while many of the clearest and most identifiable boundaries were the same as those proposed in the models, the minor roads or geographic features used for ward boundaries in some areas would not work.
- several of the wards in both models presented a potentially high risk of moving outside the legislated +/-10% tolerance by the time of the 2024 local council elections.

The panel, while not adopting any of the mapped proposals in full or to a significant degree, used features from both to improve and inform the recommended electoral structure. It notes features common across all the proposed models and the structures proposed in submissions, as evidence to support inclusion in the final recommendation.

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 10 am on 16 August 2023. Two people registered to speak at the hearing, though one person withdrew on the day.

You can find a list of people who spoke at the hearing in [Appendix 2](#).

Councillor Brian Little (elected from the current 3-councillor Mount Waverley Ward) spoke in support of Model 2. Having served on the council for 13 years, Councillor Little had worked under single councillor and multi-councillor ward structures and stated that this experience shaped the feedback and suggestions provided as part of the review.

Councillor Little is a 'champion' of the ward he represented, and detailed 4 key focus areas of his role:

1. Activity centres: primarily commercial precincts and adjacent housing zones, where councillors experience change and challenges.
2. Sporting clubs: majority council provided and maintained, with continual need for new / updated infrastructure.
3. Social housing: significant work and representation demands related to Holmesglen-Chadstone area of the council.
4. Council-provided and maintained spaces such as walking/bike paths, common areas, parks and reserves.

Councillor Little felt all of the models would distribute councillor responsibilities, challenges, and workloads effectively. However, concerns were raised about the impact of models 1 and 3 on representation of interests related to activity centres and residents living in social housing, specifically:

- The division of the Glen Waverley commercial area between wards splitting The Glen and Kingsway precinct.
- Division of Mount Waverley shopping centre down Stephenson's Road.
- Division of Holmesglen area across the Gardiners Creek and Huntingdale wards.

While the eastern and southern wards (7 wards in total) were identical in models 1 and 2, the division of the current 3-councillor Mount Waverley Ward in Model 1 was of most concern.

The panel was keen for feedback from Councillor Little on using part of Scotchmans Creek rather than the Monash Freeway as the southern boundary for Huntingdale Ward in Model 3. Councillor Little saw Monash Freeway as a hard boundary, with residents identifying as living 'north or south of the freeway'. Regarding the working relationship of the current councillors in Mount Waverley Ward, and how this might be impacted under Model 2, Councillor Little commented the good working relationships currently would likely continue under the new electoral structure. On a question about which model would better balance councillor workloads

in the context of splitting The Glen shopping centre and Kingsway commercial precinct, Councillor Little suggested Model 2. This was because Model 2 did not split the area across wards as in models 1 and 3, stating that it made more sense to maintain the whole area in the one ward, allowing the councillor to champion the interests relevant to it.

Findings and recommendation

As outlined in the submission guide for this review, the panel is committed to the principle of 'one vote, one value', which is a requirement for subdivided electoral structures under the Act. This is to ensure that every person's vote counts equally. When undertaking an electoral structure review, the panel must adhere to the Act's legislated equality requirement to seek to ensure the number of voters per councillor in a ward to be within +/-10% of the average number of voters per councillor in any other ward.

The equality requirement exists to support fair and equitable representation for all voters within a local council (and consequently facilitate good governance), which is a major aim of this review. All wards in a subdivided electoral structure recommended by the panel must aim to be within the legislated tolerance in time for the 2024 local council elections. While the panel understands the concerns of these submitters, the panel must comply with legislated requirements.

Number of councillors

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found 11 councillors to be an appropriate number for Monash City Council.

The panel considered the characteristics of Monash City Council in relation to similar metropolitan councils, including its size and geography, population and the number and distribution of voters across the council area.

Monash City Council currently has an estimated 120,771 voters represented by 11 councillors. The council covers an area of 81.2 km². Other metropolitan councils with a similar number of voters usually have 11 councillors. Forecasts indicate only modest population change is expected, and with no significant special circumstances evident across the council, the panel considers it appropriate for the total number of councillors to remain unchanged.

Electoral structure

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found Model 1 to be the single-councillor ward model with the best potential to promote fair and equitable representation for voters in Monash City Council and consequently facilitate good governance.

The panel adopted the following approaches to develop the models presented in the preliminary report:

- Model 1: prioritised the use of strong, identifiable features as boundaries, such as main roads and railway lines to capture communities of interest. The wards covering the north of the council are east-west in orientation. The Monash Freeway is used as a continuous boundary to separate the northern and southern areas of the council.
- Model 2: focus on maintaining a majority of the existing ward boundaries. Wards in the northern half of the council are mostly divided using north-south main roads, making

each more vertical in orientation. The Monash Freeway is used the same as in Model 1 and also has the same ward structures in the south and east of the council.

- Model 3: different to the other models. Ward boundaries depart from the Monash Freeway in 2 areas, following instead Scotchmans Creek in the west of the council and using a combination of main roads to separate wards in the south-east of the council. This approach allows the Glen Waverley train line to be used in its entirety and requires the use of some less clear boundaries in the east of the council.

Overall, the panel felt all 3 models would provide representation to the communities of interest throughout the council area but considered they had important differences.

The boundary structure of the 6 wards in the southern half of the council (Warrigal, Banksia, University, Wellington, Waverley Park and Jells) are the same in models 1 and 2. In Model 3 Warrigal, Banksia, University and Waverley Park wards are more compact in shape, providing a different split of the commercial and residential areas in the south of the council. In all 3 models, the Oakleigh and Clayton activity centres are wholly in one ward. A drawback identified in Model 3 was the less compact Brentwood and Jells wards, with concerns this structure could result in some clear communities of interest not being captured effectively. The elongated Jells Ward in particular takes in more than half of the council's eastern boundary, with this being raised in one response submission as not suitable for the communities in that area.

Gallaghers Ward in the north-east pocket is similar in all 3 preliminary report models. In Model 1, the ward is more compact following 3 major roads – Highbury in the north, Springvale in the west and Waverley in the south. Slight variations were required to the ward boundaries in models 2 and 3 to ensure all wards in this area comply with the +/-10% requirement at the 2024 local council elections. Relatively minor roads were used in the north-western corner of Model 2 (Gyton Avenue and Rowitta Drive) and in the south-western corner of Model 3 (Wilson and Gallaghers Roads). While not significantly impacting communities of interest in those areas, the panel did feel that the ward boundaries in Model 1 were much cleaner.

Where the 3 models differ the most was in the ward structures for the northern part of the council area. The whole area covered under the current Mount Waverley Ward and part of the current Glen Waverley Ward were divided into 4 wards, horizontal (east-west) in orientation in Models 1 and 3. In Model 2, the same area was split into 4 wards running in a north-south (vertical) direction.

While the Blackburn and Scotchmans Creek wards have the same boundaries across Model 1 and Model 3, there are minor differences in the ward structures of the Huntingdale and Gardiners Creek wards. The panel noted that these changes received no comment or feedback in any of the response submissions.

In contrast, Model 2 delivered a very different division of the same area, with the boundaries for each of the 4 wards primarily following major arterial roads north to south from the council boundary – Blackburn Road separates the Bogong and Scotchmans Creeks wards,

Stephensons Road dividing the Scotchmans Creek and Damper Creek wards, with Huntingdale Road splitting the Damper Creek and Holmesglen Wards.

The panel considered the location of activity centres across each of these models, taking into account feedback provided by Councillor Little during the public hearing, along with the representation of communities of interest in each ward. The panel noted the communities north of the Monash Freeway are relatively homogenous and likely better represented under the ward structures of Model 1 and Model 3, rather than divided down the major north-south roads. The structure of the eastern wards was considered more logical and better balanced in Models 1 and 2, and this was the same for the southern wards. The panel did note that while the division of the Mount Waverley and Glen Waverley activity centres was not ideal in any of the 3 models, the same might also be said about the way the commercial and light industrials zones of the University, Wellington and Banksia wards are split.

On balance, the panel considered Model 1 divided the council area in a more structured way than Model 2 or 3. While both of these models had some wards where the boundaries may better serve parts of the council's population, overall Model 1 distributed the population and communities of interest in a more equitable way. The view of the panel was that this would more likely provide a fair and equitable division for voters who are generally all in the same wards under the current electoral structure.

The panel noted that introducing single-councillor wards represents a large electoral change for Monash City Council, with this electoral structure last in place prior to 2005. Achieving models that divide communities of interest into appropriate wards, while also accounting for population growth and distribution, as well as ensuring they comply with the +/-10% requirement through to and beyond the 2024 local council elections was challenging.

While it is difficult to predict the number of candidates likely to stand at future elections, past election results provide some indication. The panel examined past election results for Monash City Council including numbers of candidates nominating, incidences of uncontested elections and rates of informal voting. It found there has been relatively strong candidate numbers across all wards. The panel assumes this trend will continue under a structure of 11 single-councillor wards, minimising the risk of uncontested or failed elections.

After considering communities of interest, councillor workloads and the boundaries used in each model, the panel considers Model 1 to be the single-councillor ward model with the best potential to promote fair and equitable representation for voters in Monash City Council and consequently facilitate good governance under the requirements of the Act.

Ward names

The ward names for the panel's recommended electoral structure were based on the following:

- Banksia: New name based on native flora or fauna within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Blackburn: New name based on major road within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.

- Gallaghers: New name based on major road within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Gardiners Creek: Name based on a geographic feature in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Jells: New name based on a park in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Mayfield: Put forward by the panel as an alternative name for Huntingdale Ward. New name based on a park in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Scotchmans Creek: Name based on a geographic feature in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- University: New name based on a significant education institution in the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Warrigal: New name based on major road within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Waverley Park: New name based on a primary school within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.
- Wellington: New name based on major road within the ward. This name is registered in the VICNAMES register.

Two submissions made specific comment on ward names, with the Monash Council's Gender Equity Advisory Committee's submission focussed on ward names that better reflect the diversity of the Victorian population.

The panel's recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Monash City Council adopt a single-councillor ward structure, with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.

The recommended names for the 11 wards in this electoral structure are Banksia, Blackburn, Gallaghers, Gardiners Creek, Jells, Mayfield, Scotchmans Creek, University, Warrigal, Waverley Park and Wellington.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the Act. This electoral structure was designated as Model 1 in the preliminary report.

A detailed map of the boundaries for the recommended electoral structure is provided as [Appendix 1](#).

References

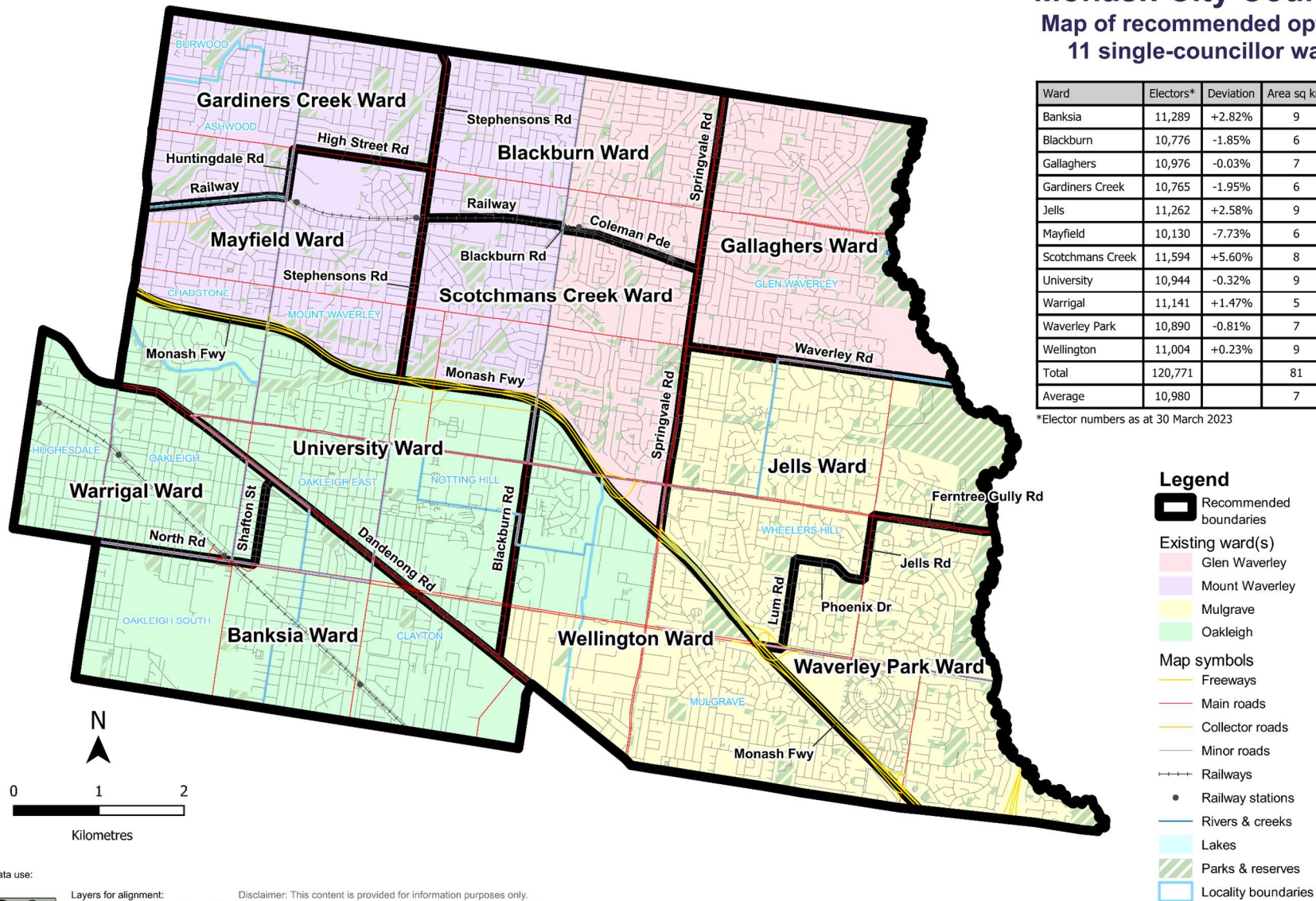
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) (2022a) [2021 Census All Person QuickStats, Monash \(LGA\)](#), ABS, accessed 31 May 2023.
- (2022b) [2021 Census All Persons QuickStats, Rest of Vic](#), ABS, accessed 31 May 2023.
- (2022c) [2021 Census All Persons QuickStats, Glen Waverley](#), ABS, accessed 2 June 2023.
- (2022d) [2021 Census All Persons QuickStats, Mount Waverley](#), ABS, accessed 2 June 2023.
- (2022e) [2021 Census All Persons QuickStats, Clayton](#), ABS, accessed 2 June 2023.
- (2016) [2016 Census All Person QuickStats, Monash \(C\) \(LGA\)](#), ABS, accessed 2 June 2023.
- (2011) [2011 Census All Person QuickStats, Monash \(C\) \(LGA\)](#), ABS, accessed 2 June 2023.
- Monash City Council (2023) [Proposed developments](#), Monash City Council, accessed 9 June 2023.
- Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (Vic)
- .id (informed decisions) (2022a) [Welcome to the Monash City Council population forecast](#), .id, accessed 31 May 2023.
- (2022b) [Welcome to Monash City Council community profile](#), .id, accessed 31 May 2023.
- Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)
- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
- Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 (Vic)

Appendix 1: Map of recommended structure

Monash City Council
Map of recommended option
11 single-councillor wards

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Banksia	11,289	+2.82%	9
Blackburn	10,776	-1.85%	6
Gallaghers	10,976	-0.03%	7
Gardiners Creek	10,765	-1.95%	6
Jells	11,262	+2.58%	9
Mayfield	10,130	-7.73%	6
Scotchmans Creek	11,594	+5.60%	8
University	10,944	-0.32%	9
Warrigal	11,141	+1.47%	5
Waverley Park	10,890	-0.81%	7
Wellington	11,004	+0.23%	9
Total	120,771		81
Average	10,980		7

*Elector numbers as at 30 March 2023



Data use:



Layers for alignment:
© State of Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action)

Disclaimer: This content is provided for information purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and authenticity of the content, the Victorian government does not accept any liability to any person for the information provided.

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area # (square km)
Banksia	11,289	+2.82%	9
Blackburn	10,776	-1.85%	6
Gallaghers	10,976	-0.03%	7
Gardiners Creek	10,765	-1.95%	6
Jells	11,262	+2.58%	9
Mayfield	10,130	-7.73%	6
Scotchmans Creek	11,594	+5.60%	8
University	10,944	-0.32%	9
Warrigal	11,141	+1.47%	5
Waverley Park	10,890	-0.81%	7
Wellington	11,004	+0.23%	9
Total	120,771	-	81
Average	10,980	-	7

*Elector numbers as at 30 March 2023

Ward area (square km) and total council area is measured at level of accuracy required for electoral boundaries. This may vary slightly from other data sources.

Appendix 2: Public involvement

The panel wishes to thank all submitters to the review and speakers at the public hearing for their participation in the review process.

Response submissions

Response submissions were made by:

Ali, Mohammed	Meng, Hengchen
Bell, Peta	Monash Council's Gender Equity Advisory Committee
Berk, Daniel	Moore, Carissa
Genoglou, Gwen	Nielsen, Jan
Green, John	Palatsides, Maria
Hocking, Rosalie	Patodekar, Nikhil
Jap, Albertus Fredick	Pavlidis, Lefki
Koo, Sunghoe	Samarasekera, Wasantha
Krishnan, Guru raja rao	Seldon, Henry Lee
Little, Brian (Councillor)	Walters, Reuben
Liu, Xuan	Yuan, Larry
Maki, Brandon	Zacharchuk, Bo
Mehta, Ritesh	

Public hearing

The following people spoke at the public hearing:

Little, Brian (Councillor)

Forecast information referred to in the text of this report is based on forecasts prepared by .id – informed decisions id.com.au. .id and its licensors are the sole and exclusive owners of all rights, title and interest subsisting in that part of the report content where .id are identified. Some of .id content is a derivative of ABS Data, which can be accessed from the website of the Australian Bureau of Statistics at abs.gov.au, and licensed on terms published on the ABS website.

